

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 668.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1876.

PRICE 1½d.

CONJURERS AND SPIRITUALISTS.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

DOWN to a comparatively recent period the science of spiritualism has contented itself with vagaries in the shape of rappings and various other manifestations which, while revealing the supposed presence of spirits, have presented nothing very tangible. The séance has served its purpose by attracting and mystifying an audience, who, paying handsomely for an exhibition of tambourine-beating, horn-blowing, and bell-ringing in a darkened chamber, have retired more mystified than ever. The spirit, ubiquitous in its movements, has refused to be fixed. A step, however, has at length been taken in another direction; 'spirits,' though still refusing to be captured like ordinary mortals, have consented to allow themselves to be photographed! They now obediently follow those over whom they watch, to the studios of photographers, and there falling into a graceful attitude, allow those who believe themselves to be accompanied through life by a 'guardian angel' to satisfy their vanity (and credulity) by having a *carte-de-visite* taken of themselves and their 'attendant spirit.' The resulting *carte* gives such an air of reality to the affair, that it is considered rank folly to doubt any longer, when the spirits can be actually photographed, and thus brought within the ken of the most hardened sceptic.

Such piteous folly on one side and arrant deception on the other are more prevalent than ordinary folks generally suppose. A case brought to our notice from Paris will illustrate the way in which this class of photographers impose on the public. The police, hearing that a certain photographer of that city was pocketing large profits by taking these photographs for credulous people, despatched an emissary to discover the fraud. On making known his wish to be photographed with his guardian spirit, he was requested to leave the studio for a short time for the purpose of the spirit being invoked. During his absence, a plate, prepared in the ordinary way, was exposed to light

for a few seconds opposite a screen whereon a vague ghostly image was figured. The man's photograph superposed—gave, it is needless to say, the required effect. The photographer, on a hint from the police, ceased to take spirit photographs.

These photographs may also be produced by the photographer's common process of printing from two negatives; one negative takes the sitter, the other the 'spirit' as before; on printing from both, the effects are combined. Another method depends upon a curious electrical fact. If a tinfoil device be laid between two sheets of glass, and tinfoil be laid on the outer surfaces of the glass, and then electric sparks passed between the tinfoil coatings, it is found that an image of the device is formed upon the two glass plates, caused by a molecular change in the glass. This image is at first invisible, but on breathing on the glass it becomes visible, and a photograph can then be taken of it in the ordinary way.

But the cleverest plan of all is that which utilises the lately discovered optical principle known as fluorescence. Paint on a white screen with sulphate of quinine (which is colourless) something shadowy to represent the 'ethereal being.' Expose this to bright sunlight for a short time, and then place your unsuspecting believer in 'guardian angels' before this screen; photograph him in the ordinary way, and at the same time you obtain a picture of your painting, about which he is ignorant. Finish the photograph in the ordinary way. The quinine drawing will 'come out' hazy and indistinct as part of the picture; and then your believer in spirits, who has longed to have his 'attendant spirit' manifested to him, receives it tremblingly with gratitude. Alas for the credulity of mankind!

Without discussing in detail any more 'spiritualistic manifestations,' let us proceed to illustrate the following proposition—that conjurers, apart from any nonsense about spirits, black or white, visible or invisible, can perform, have performed, and are now performing, achievements more surprising than any *well-authenticated* cases of so-called spiritualism.

Although full of the vanity so often displayed by thorough Frenchmen, Robert-Houdin, in his *Memoirs*, gives us a reliable account of the long course of practice and study which enabled him to become the prince of conjurers, and which (we may infer) similarly fitted Frikell, Robin, Jacobs, Bosco, Hermann, Anderson, Stodare, Heller, Lynn, Maskelyne, &c. to bewilder their audiences with feats which fully equal those of the 'spirit mediums' in inexplicability, without being disfigured by the rogueries and sillinesses chargeable to too many of those who pretend that disembodied beings, supramundane or submundane, participate in the manifestations. Sir David Brewster's *Natural Magic* is full of instructive information on the possible—and in most cases verified—means of developing phenomena of a startling character in a simple way; and Sir Walter Scott's *Demonology and Witchcraft* is worth studying in a similar spirit. Dr Paris, Professor Faraday, Dr Tyndall—all have contributed to the available stock of information on these points.

As a knowledge of the physical sciences plays an important part in matters of this kind, the exhibitor, when he possesses more of this knowledge than the majority of his audience, and is withal an ingenious contriver of mechanism, has immense powers of cajoling. When Robert-Houdin went to Algeria, part of his work (at the suggestion of the French government) was to detect and expose certain Arab sorcerers, who had obtained a pernicious hold over the minds of the ignorant natives. He experienced no great difficulty in ferreting out their secrets—clever achievements, but with no more sorcery in them than in Houdin himself. What he particularly aimed at, however, was to outdo the Arabs in their own craft; to achieve, in the presence of spectators, phenomena which would plunge the sorcerers themselves into blank amazement. His famous feat in this line was, at the word of command, to reduce a strong stalwart Algerian to the weakness of a child, and then as instantly to restore his strength again. The man could or could not lift an iron box from the floor, just as Houdin willed that he should or should not. The surprise of the Arabs at this feat amounted to scare and consternation. Houdin (previously preparing his room for the purpose) had availed himself of the beautiful discovery in electro-magnetism, whereby a bar of soft iron can instantly be made a magnet by sending an electric current in coils around it, and then de-magnetised by suspending the current. How such a piece of iron below the floor of the room could be made, at the pleasure of the conjurer, to tighten and loosen the iron box resting on the floor, the reader will be able to understand by a little consideration. That most elegant of public exhibitions in England, the 'Invisible Girl,'* was the product of an inventor familiar with acoustical science; it was a skilful

application of the principle that sound will retain its power for long distances when conveyed through a tube or pipe. The tiny lady-like voice, speaking and singing in a metal globe a few inches in diameter, was one of the most inexplicable things ever brought before an audience; yet was it perfectly consistent with known physical laws. We cannot repress a belief that the Invisible Girl would have vanquished many a 'spirit-voice,' just as Robert-Houdin vanquished the Arab sorcerers.

Connected with the same acoustic principles are many public performances which never fail to excite astonishment in the minds of persons unprepared or only half-prepared to trace them to their scientific foundation. Ventriloquism ('voice issuing from the stomach') is a striking case in point. The pitch, loudness, and *timbre* or quality of a sound greatly influence our judgment in determining its direction and distance; the ventriloquist has a peculiar power of varying these conditions; and thus he can make his audience believe that sounds, really issuing from his mouth (albeit the lips may be quite motionless), come from a distance—down the chimney, up from a cellar, out of a small box, in from the street, or what not. He would be a bold man who would deny that some at least of the 'spirit-voices' of recent times are the product of successful ventriloquism. That we must not always 'believe our own ears' was amply proved by the late Mr Love, whose ventriloquistic wonders still cling to the memory of those who heard them: if ever a man's voice issued from a box that did not contain a man, it could not have deceived the audience more completely than did Mr Love's box-voice performance.

The phrase just used, 'believe our own ears,' leads us to a far more important matter connected alike with conjuring and with spiritualistic performances. It is now quite certain that we must not always 'believe our own eyes.' The retina is susceptible of being set into vibratory action by organic causes within the eye or the head itself; and a luminous sensation is experienced without, or wholly independent of, any rays of light entering the pupil of the eye. The superstitious fears entertained in the darkness of night by weak persons, especially if badness of health be superadded to ignorance and timidity, are largely dependent on luminous impressions in the eye not caused by any optical rays received from without. The optico-chemical phenomenon of phosphorescence has had much to do with the production of 'mysterious lights,' accidentally or designedly as the case may be; and many a thrilling story of 'spectral' appearances stands sadly in need of scrutiny on this ground. Let us take an incident mentioned in a recent number of the *Journal* (p. 415), and draw an inference from it. A scientific man describing some experiments he had made with phosphuretted hydrogen (the gas which produces Will-o'-the-wisp), remarks: 'On retiring to bed, I found my body quite luminous, with a glow like that of phosphorus when exposed to the air. Either

* See *Chambers's Journal*, March 18, 1876, 'Mysterious Sounds.'

some of the gas having escaped combustion, or the product of its burning, must have been absorbed into the system, and the phosphorus afterwards separated at the surface have then undergone slow combustion.' We have here *italicised* a few words which are well worth the reader's attention. Neither as a conjurer nor as a spiritualist, neither intending nor expecting any such phenomenon, a chemical experimenter found his body, in the darkness of night, enveloped in a weird-like spectral luminosity, well calculated to give origin to a narrative of 'spirit-lights' to those who believe in such things.

Personal peculiarities are largely concerned in some conjuring tricks. Robert-Houdin, when a youth, saw an exhibitor spitted through the body with a sword; and when himself an experienced conjurer, shewed how this might be done. If the man were spare of body, tightly compressed round the middle, and provided with a false abdomen, a sword might be passed right through his apparent body without lacerating or even touching his skin. A seeming stabbing through the nose with a penknife, and the sword-swallowing trick, he similarly unmasked by careful observation. The 'rope trick,' in which the conjurers fully equal the spiritualists, illustrates the remarkable way in which the muscles can, in some persons, be distended and contracted at pleasure. By a strong in draught of breath, and an exercise of will, a man can really expand his circumference, or that of his arms, during the tying of a rope, and collapse again when the time for self-untying has arrived. Some individuals are so strangely jointed that they can perform apparent miracles upon themselves in an instant. A celebrated exemplar of this class was Joseph Clark, a posturer in the time of Charles II. He was so exceptionally formed, and had such absolute command of muscles and joints, that he could become as it were *some one else* in a moment—now a hunchback; now an obese man, as if 'with good capon lined'; now a skin-and-grief; and anon with one foot heel foremost and the other toe foremost. He thoroughly deceived a distinguished surgeon once, who dismissed him as a hopeless cripple; and on another occasion bewildered a tailor by an inexplicable change of bulk and shape when new garments were taken home.

Digital, ocular, and bodily expertness acquired by long practice in particular ways, help many a conjurer to achieve results which (in other circles) would be attributed to 'spirits.' Robert-Houdin trained himself and his little son, during many walks through the streets of Paris, to a wonderful quickness of eye in discriminating dozens of different objects seen merely at a glance. Passing a toy-shop, father and son would try which could remember and name the greatest number of trinkets displayed in the window; or at a book-seller's, the greatest number of titles of books and names of authors—merely by a glance while walking slowly along. He humorously, but probably with some truth, declared that the gentler sex especially can do this in their own particular way; let one lady pass another in the street, and, with surprising quickness, each will have scanned the dress of the other from top to toe, from hat-feather to boots, so as to be able to describe and criticise it with wondrous minuteness in regard to colour, shape, material, quality, and

condition. Success in this rapid discrimination has much to do with the *clairvoyant* exhibitions of the superior grade of conjurers. Numerous small articles, held up by the visitors in the room, are discriminated and mentally catalogued in an instant; and the experimenter, in questioning the blindfolded confederate, uses such words (previously agreed upon) as will suggest the proper answer to the question itself. Robert-Houdin was, we believe, the inventor of this capital trick, in which he has been followed with more or less success by imitators of both sexes; he never professed for an instant to be guided by 'spirits,' yet his clairvoyance was quite as surprising as that of the so-called 'mediums.' Expertness of fingers is another of the items in the training of a successful conjurer. The tricks with cards, which so thoroughly baffle ordinary spectators, depend mostly on a delicacy of touch which few of us can appreciate. The plate-spinning of circus and acrobatic performers, surprising in its appearance, is due simply to the effect of centrifugal motion (produced by slight movements of the performer's hands) in preventing the plate from falling on one side rather than another. A trained eye and trained hand act in conjunction in the feat of keeping up four balls in the air while the performer is reading a book; while trained eye, muscles, and powers of equilibrium are all brought into requisition by the circus rider, who spins several plates and tosses several balls while galloping round the arena.

In another paper we shall notice the inexplicable nature of some kinds of *automatic* exhibitions, such as those performed by Messrs Maskeyne and Cooke.

FALLEN FORTUNES.

CHAPTER L.—MR HOLT MAKES JEFF HIS CONFIDANT.

UNDER ordinary circumstances, Mr Holt could scarcely have made an observation so displeasing, and calculated to set his companion at odds with him, as that most unexpected one with respect to Kitty; but the tone in which it was uttered, and the look that accompanied it, disarmed the young fellow altogether; nay, more, it filled his soul with compassion for this beaten wretch. For if ever a man looked beaten in the battle of life, not at one point, but at all, and not only beaten, but broken and utterly despairing, it was the once prosperous, and demonstratively prosperous, Richard Holt.

'Does Kitty know of all this, Jeff?'

The use of the two familiar names was most significant, since they comprised not only a confession of hopeless love, but an appeal to the generosity of his rival. 'Tell me,' it seemed to say, 'for mercy's sake, if I am lost in the eyes of her I love, as well as in those of the rest of the world; or whether, so far as she is concerned, I can still hold up my head? I appeal to you, because your heart is kind and sound, and you are one neither to lie to me, nor, though I am helpless and fallen, to tread me under foot.'

'Kitty does not know, Mr Holt—as yet,' answered Jeff hesitatingly.

'And yet you knew, and did not tell her!' put in the other quickly. 'There are few men in your case who would have waited so long. Her

father, however, has perhaps informed her this morning?

'No, Mr Holt; it was arranged that she is to be told nothing till he has had your reply to his letter.'

'Then I will give him his reply,' answered the other calmly. He opened a little box that lay on his office desk, and took from it a sheet of figures. 'Here is my account with John Dalton,' said he, 'which you can presently examine at your leisure. He will find that I was a more honest man than he took me for—up to yonder date,' pointing it out with his finger. 'The *Lara* itself was a *bond-fide* investment in the first instance. He and I both made money out of it, and would have continued to do so legitimately, but for my passion for the girl you love. That was what drove me to my ruin. Ah, you do not comprehend that! If you loved her, as I did—and as I do—it would be easier for you to understand it.—Nay, forgive me. I was wrong there. An honest love doubtless takes honest ways, and only those, to win its object. Call mine dishonest, then, if you will; yet it was genuine of its sort, believe me. Its nature was devouring, and I denied it nothing—honour, reputation, self-respect, were all thrown into that fatal flame. From the first moment that I beheld her, I swore to make that girl my wife; and now I shall die—perjured.' He smiled a wretched smile, and sighed, then wearily went on: 'Her father would have none of me. He had opened the doors of his house to me with reluctance, and I found no favour there. In vain I worked for him and enriched him. When I ventured upon ever so slight an approach to familiarity with those belonging to him, he took no pains to conceal his annoyance—his astonishment at my presumption. I had some pride of my own also, and this wounded me to the quick. Since I had no chance to attain my object while he was prosperous, I resolved to ruin him.'

Jeff uttered an exclamation of disgust.

'I am sorry to offend you, Mr Derwent; but this is a relation of facts. The last dying speech and confession of a man under the gallows, you know' (here he smiled again, if possible more ghastly than before), 'does not concern itself with sentiment. I had tried fair means to no purpose; and I was not to be balked. I could not bend John Dalton, so I resolved to break him. Hitherto he had been, practically speaking, my partner in all the business we transacted with one another; now I made him unconsciously my confederate. I set rumours afloat about the *Lara*, which brought down the shares, and then I bought them up. In the end, Dalton and I possessed the mine between us, though I told him afterwards that I had parted with all my interest in it. Whatever we had now to do in concert, I secured the lion's share of profit for myself—it is all there' (he pointed to the schedule) 'in black and white—not because I was grasping, but because I wished to dock his gains. When there was loss, it was he who chiefly suffered. I fed his ambition, and encouraged him to make a figure in politics as well as commerce; knowing that politics would cost him money and not fill his pocket, as they do with some men. When funds began to fail him, I matured my scheme concerning the mine. I sent a creature of my own (the "expert" Tobbit) to Brazil, to report upon the *Lara*—to the English shareholders (in reality to Dalton and myself), with instructions to

declare it valueless; with what success you know. Still I could not get Dalton to dispose of his shares: some influence was at work—I now feel certain it must have been that of Astor—to induce him to hold them. His resolve to go to Brazil to look into matters for himself, filled me with dismay, yet I strove in vain to hinder him. When he had once embarked, it was, I knew, but a question of a few months, and then my fraud would be exposed. But if I could only have secured Kitty in the meantime, that would not have disturbed me. To that end I applied every means in my power; but though I had a keen ally in Mrs Campden, I made no progress. You will learn all that from other sources. You know, even though the *Flamborough Head* went down, and Fortune seemed to favour me to the uttermost, and to turn her back upon those weak ones with whom I warred, that I was never Kitty's accepted suitor.'

Jeff was not quick at figures, but he could calculate better than any man what it cost his defeated rival to say those words. And yet even he knew not their full meaning. This unhappy wretch was not all evil (as some of us are, I fear, in spite of some philosophic observers who have reported to the contrary); since he could not marry Kitty himself, he was willing that the man who might, and who certainly deserved to, do so, should be quite clear in his own mind that his wife had never plighted troth—no matter under what circumstances—to another; he was willing that this should be, and he was above measure desirous that Kitty in accepting Jeff should on her part feel uncompromised as respected himself. It was not all generosity—though people can afford to be generous when making their wills; he was solicitous that his memory at least should not be odious to Kitty.

'Do I speak plainly, Mr Derwent?' said Holt, after a short pause.

'You are giving yourself unnecessary pain, sir,' answered the young fellow kindly; 'as for me, I am but a messenger to carry back to those who sent me your acceptance of certain terms.'

'That is true; but confession, they say, is good for the soul, and I prefer you to any priest, Jeff.' He was right there, so far at all events as making his peace in this world was concerned. He knew that in that young and generous nature he should find such an apologist as he would have looked for in vain elsewhere; and that apologist would have the ear of her whose censure or contempt alone had terrors for him. 'As for the terms you speak of,' he went on, 'I have no choice but to accept them. The figures I have given you will shew my indebtedness to Mr Dalton, to which the interest shall be added. The calculation will take a little time—perhaps a few hours; may I ask, until they have expired, that this—here his face shewed a tinge of colour—'this matter of business may not be spoken of, save among those to whom it is already known?'

'So far as I have any influence, Mr Holt, you may depend'—

'I ask no more, save one thing,' interrupted the other with a wave of his hand; the first recurrence he had made to his favourite continental manner. 'Though easily granted, it is a great favour, but it is the last I shall ever seek from you.—You hesitate to pledge yourself beforehand,' added he with

a faint smile: 'that is only natural under the circumstances. However, this little matter can be performed "without prejudice," as the lawyers say: there is no dishonesty in it, I assure you; no harm to any one, but some good, or at least some pleasure to me, whose pleasures are mostly come to an end.'

'I will do it, sir,' said the young fellow simply.

'Then good-bye, Jeff; and may your life be a brighter and a better one than mine has been.'

'But the favour, sir?' said the young fellow, greatly moved.

'Oh, it was merely that—that you would shake hands with me,' He did so. 'After all that has come and gone, I was more than doubtful whether you would. It cost you something, Jeff, I saw; but in the end you will not repent it.'

Then resuming his usual business manner, he added: 'John Dalton shall receive all his dues by to-morrow morning at latest; and your salary will be sent to you, up to this date, by the same post. I am sorry that circumstances have caused us to part company, Mr Derwent; but needs must when the evil one drives, and he was certainly the coachman in this case. As for to-day, I have much business of a private nature to arrange, and have no further occasion for your services.'

As he said those words, he sat down, and took up his pen; Geoffrey bowed and left the room, and in a few minutes the office. His leave-taking had been altogether different from anything he could have imagined, and puzzled him, now that it was over, even more than during its occurrence. The tone and manner of the speaker had seemed to explain much at the time, but now they were absent, his memory failed to supply them; the lights of the picture were wanting, and the impression it produced upon him was one of unmitigated gloom.

Its tints would have been darker yet if he could have looked—but a few hours—into the future.

CHAPTER II.—HOW MR HOLT HASTENED MATTERS.

In spite of all that had happened to the family in whom Geoffrey Derwent had so large an interest—the return of Dalton, his recovered wealth, which would once more reinstate those belonging to him in their former position; and his own prospects, which had altered so materially for the worse (for the 'opening' which he had looked for in business was now closed, and the gulf between him and Kitty yawned as wide as ever)—in spite of all these important considerations, Jeff's mind, as he turned his steps towards Islington, was mainly occupied with his late employer. Notwithstanding all the villainy to which he had confessed, the young fellow's heart was pitiful towards him; not a word of sorrow for his delinquencies against Dalton had passed his lips, though he had promised material reparation; but on the other hand his sensitiveness as respected Kitty had been extreme. It was for her—though selfishly—that he had sinned—had gone through the fire of shame and the foul water of fraud; and Jeff's own great love for her—though it would never have thus led him astray—made excuses for his rival. He pictured him during those weeks when Dalton had first sailed from England, and he must have been expecting day by day the tidings of the exposure of his crime,

and pitied him. It was perhaps pity misplaced, for Holt was a man with nerves of iron; a man, too, of means and subtle device, whom the Law could not have thrown on his back like a turtle (as it throws the poor and dull who transgress it) to await trial and sentence; but judging his case by what his own would have been in the like conditions, and also taking into consideration the fact that the man was down, and harmless, Jeff on the whole was glad that he had given him the hand, not indeed of friendship, but forgiveness.

Jeff's day was all his own—as many days to come were, alas! likely to be—yet he hesitated to visit Brown Street, where of late he had been so unwelcome. Moreover, he feared that he should be subject to questioning there upon the events of the day, which recent experience warned him that he was not fitted to undergo; he entertained the just conviction that Jenny would have 'turned him inside out' (as they say at the Old Bailey) in five minutes of cross-examination. He resolved to go, therefore, to Dalton's lodgings, and there leave a line to state the result of his interview with Holt, with that proviso added as to 'the date of publication' of it, and then pass the time as he could till evening. He found, however, a note at the house awaiting him, asking him to come on to Brown Street to dinner; an invitation which he had not the courage—or the cowardice—to refuse.

He found the family all in high spirits, with one exception. Dalton indeed was not so debonaire and joyous as he had been wont to be; his manner had something of sardonic exultation, in place of its old abandon, and it became him less. He had been hard hit, and he was a man not used to blows; such men return them with interest, and feel a pleasure in the repayment. A rapid glance had passed between him and Jeff, which assured him that his enemy was vanquished. Jenny, bright, gay, and frail as a bird, was full of fun, with every now and then a dash of spleen among her sprightliness, like a sparrow turned sparrowhawk; she had been hit too (for was not each slight a blow to one so fragile), and was not one to forget it. The sudden change for the better in the sick girl shewed how much mental trouble and material privations had had to do with her malady. Tony was in tearing spirits, now dancing about his father, now romping with Uncle Philip, whom he had taken to as naturally as though he had been a member of the family from the first. Only Kitty was not merry: when her face was turned towards her father or Jenny, it beamed indeed with smiles; a sense of gratitude seemed to environ her like an atmosphere; but she was strangely silent, and when not addressed, had a grave and quiet look, that reminded one more of resignation than contentment. Perhaps, Jeff dared to hope, she had been reflecting, like himself, that the course of true love was not likely to run smoother than of yore with them; that this new-found prosperity, while it made self-sacrifice unnecessary, would still be a fatal obstacle to her heart's desire. For that she knew that she was once more prosperous, was certain. The air of the whole party convinced him that such was the case, and especially the air of good Nurse Haywood, who waited upon them at dinner in person, and treated 'Master John,' as she still persisted in calling Dalton, like a prince who has not only returned to his native land, but come back to enjoy his own again. He would have had

of her best as long as it lasted—had he been a beggar, but her behaviour would in that case have been less unlike a prolonged flourish of trumpets. Indeed it might be said that there were cymbals also, for in her excitement and exultation she clashed the plates together and broke a couple.

'It doesn't matter, if there are enough left to go round,' said Dalton.

'Thank goodness, it doesn't, Master John,' answered the old lady; 'for there are plenty *now* where those came from.'

She had got some bottles of champagne from the public-house, the whole of which she would have dispensed to the company, and thereby have poisoned them, for the Brown Street vintage was execrable.

'I am afraid you don't like it, sir,' said she, aggrieved; 'but it was the best I could get at such a short notice.'

'The wine is excellent, nurse,' said Dalton gravely; 'but one bottle is quite sufficient to drink the health of all *our* friends in.'

The list of toasts indeed was short enough. They drank Dr Curzon's health; and, in spite of her remonstrances, they drank to Nurse Haywood herself, the men shaking hands with her, and the two girls overwhelming her with caresses. It would certainly have been no exaggeration had she observed in acknowledgment, that it was the proudest moment of her life; her only reply, however, and the only one that came natural to her, was—a flood of tears.

When the ladies had retired, taking Tony the reluctant (who, so far from finding fault with the Brown Street champagne, had done ample justice to it) with them, Dalton laid his hand on Geoffrey's shoulder.

'And now, lad, for your news from Abdell Court. I need not ask if it be good news, for I have read so much as that already in your face.'

'Yes, sir; it is good news. Mr Holt admits all that is urged against him, and promises to make the completest reparation; only for a few hours—the time he named, indeed, must have elapsed by now—he begged to be spared exposure.'

'What did the fellow mean?' inquired Dalton angrily. 'Did he want to shut my mouth, if a man had asked me any time to-day, is Richard Holt a villain?'

'I think he merely meant that until you had heard from him this evening, he hoped you would not make his shame known to your own family.'

'My family!' echoed Dalton scornfully. 'The scoundrel has small claim to forbearance as respects them, I reckon. Do you know, man,' added he with stern solemnity, 'that it is thanks to him that my dear wife is lying in her grave at Sanbeck?'

It was certainly true that through Holt's fraud, Dalton had been forced to leave the country, and that out of his absence had arisen the catastrophe at the Nook.

Jeff hung his head; the argument had gone home to him; he felt he had nothing more to say for the unhappy wretch, whose hand he had taken that day for the last time.

'Come,' said Dalton; 'let us not think of villains to-night. There was one toast, Jeff, I didn't propose while the girls were here, because I wished to save your blushes; but I mean to drink it now.

—Philip, fill your glass; the sherry, I think, is a little less deadly than that champagne. As good wine needs no bush—if the converse be true, by-the-by, this wine should require a thicket—so a toast that we drink with all our hearts needs no speech. My toast is Geoffrey Derwent. You don't know him, Philip, as I know him (nor did I know him, for that matter, as I ought to have known him, till within the last two days). But you may take my word for it, that young as he is, a truer heart, or one more to be relied upon, in times that try men's hearts and shew what stuff they are made of, does not beat than his.—I need not repeat the story; but Jenny has told me all about you, Jeff; and if Kitty has told me nothing, there has been, I daresay, some very good reasons for her silence. I have no secrets from Philip here, not even that one; and I have a particular object in saying what I have to say before Philip. His notion is, that with returning prosperity, I shall fall into the old tracks; that "the deceitfulness of riches" —

'I never said so, John,' interrupted Philip; 'I only thought'—

'Well, you see, he *thought* it,' put in Dalton quickly, 'and that is quite as bad. To put the matter beyond question, however, so far as you are concerned, Jeff, I wish, in Philip's presence, to remind you of a certain confession you made to me with respect to Kitty, when you and I parted company at Riverside. Do you remember what it was, Jeff?'

'Yes, indeed; I remember very well, sir.'

'And do you recollect what I said to you in reply?'

'You said you would talk to me about that when you came back again.'

'Very good; and now, you see, I am keeping my promise. Well, if you still love Kitty, and she loves you, she is yours, Jeff!'

'O sir, you are too good!' cried Jeff, his heart bounding with joy and gratitude, though conscious of a doubt. 'But, alas! I have nothing; and Kitty will be rich; and people will say'—

'Let them say what they like, and be hanged!' cried Dalton violently. 'If "people"—by which I suppose you mean one's friends—would say a little less, and do a little more, when occasion demands it, their opinion would be of more consequence.' He pushed his chair back from the table, and began walking up and down the little room as he went volubly on: 'It has always of course been acknowledged of Society, even by the prosperous, that she was "frivolous" and "hollow," and all that sort of thing; but I could not have imagined, unless I had experienced it myself, how worthless and rotten at the core the creature is. The women are worse than the men, because they protest so much. To think of the scores of them that have smirked and smiled, and asked me after my "dear girls" with such tender sympathy; and then, when one's back was turned—as they thought for good—and these same "dear" ones were left helpless and penniless, how not one—not one of these fine folks would hold a finger out, or even say a word of comfort! No, Jeff; don't talk to me of what "people" may "say," or I shall be tempted to think that those who are not knaves in the world must needs be the other thing.'

Philip sat back in his chair, jingling some halfpence in his pocket—probably all the money he

had—and very much applauding these remarks; but a keener observer would perhaps have had a suspicion that Dalton was working himself up to this display of vehemence, or, at all events, found it necessary to nurse his wrath in order to keep it warm. The fact was, not only was his nature eminently genial, and inapt for receiving deep impressions, especially of an unpleasant sort, but second nature—use—had made him regard the very class of persons he was now anathematising, as his own world, beyond which he had few sympathies. His feelings, however, with respect to Geoffrey Derwent were genuinely what he described them to be, and he was perfectly honest in the offer he had just made him of his daughter's hand.

'Perhaps you would like to go up-stairs, my lad, and have a few words with Kitty,' added he kindly, 'while we old fellows smoke a cigar;' as he spoke he threw open the window, admitting a little air, a good deal of dust, and the growing chorus of some street-hawkers, who at that period of the evening were wont to 'work' Brown Street, and supply it with the latest sensational intelligence.

Jeff smiled his thanks, and left the room; but his step on the narrow staircase was not that of a lover who has 'asked papa' with success; and on the landing he paused for full a minute, weighing this and that, in most unlover-like fashion; for, with all his good qualities—among which a loving heart was not certainly wanting—Jeff was intensely proud. His darling hope had been, if only circumstances had permitted it, that he might have made for himself some position in the world—humble but not despicable, and such as he could have lifted Kitty out of her difficulties to share.

In wedding her as things were, he would not indeed be marrying her for money; but the inequality in their fortunes jarred upon his sensitive feelings. Among such natures—for low ones find no difficulty in the matter—it requires a strong mind and an exceptionally wholesome one to accept a pecuniary obligation without repugnance. The worship of money is so universal, that even those who ought to know it is a mere idol are apt to treat it as a sacred thing.

In the drawing-room he found Kitty seated close to her sister, with the latter's arm about her waist. It was generally Jenny who 'did the talking' when they were alone together, and she had evidently been doing it on this occasion. Kitty had the downcast looks of a listener who has been preached at.

'Talk of Jeff, and he makes his appearance!' said Jenny saucily.

'I hope I am not intruding?' observed he humbly.

'You are intruding on me, sir,' said Jenny, rising from her chair. 'I have had quite enough of you below-stairs for the present;' and off she tripped, leaving the two young people alone. The window was open here, as in the room below, but the dust was less, and the wind that passed over the flower-box on the sill brought charming odours with it.

'Kitty, dear, your father has been speaking to me most kindly,' said Jeff hesitatingly.

'He is always kind, and in your case can never, I am sure, be otherwise, Jeff,' answered she steadily. 'He knows that he owes you very much.'

'I don't feel that, Kitty; but I feel that whatever he owes me, or can owe me, it can never be

so much by a hundred times as what he says he is prepared to give me. Can you guess, Kitty, darling, what that is?'

'Jeff—Geoffrey,' said she, in distressed tones, 'did you not promise at the Nook?—'

'Yes, dear,' interrupted he; 'but that was different. The circumstances are altogether changed. They are not indeed as I could wish them to be, even yet. I am poor, I may say penniless, when compared with you.'—

'O Jeff, how dare you!' exclaimed Kitty, rising angrily from her seat. 'Do you suppose I am thinking of money? Of course, I have had to think about it of late—for others; but in a matter that concerns myself alone, can you think that your being poor or rich can draw me, by a hair's-breadth, one way or another!'

'It draws me, Kate,' cried Jeff simply. 'It is the only thing that draws me—just a hair's-breadth—away from you. I thought, when I spoke to you at the Nook, that it was the reflection how ill off we both were as respected means; and that, in your unselfishness and generosity, you felt it right to be the prop and stay of your own household, and not to look outside of it, even for such love as mine.'

'It was partly that, Jeff; but also, even then, there was another contingency, and that, alas!—the other obstacle, I mean—has grown and grown; indeed, I don't know how I stand respecting it. I—I—you must please to give me time, Jeff; and I can't promise; indeed, I can't.'

'But you have promised no one else, Kitty?'

'No; at least not exactly; but'—

The shouting of the hawkers in the street was growing nearer and nearer: as one on one side, and one on the other, they bawled together, like singers in a glee who are out of tune, it needed a practical ear to catch a word.

'This man is dreadful,' muttered Jeff; and moving quickly to the window, he pulled up the sash and shut out the sound.

'You need time, Kitty, to think it over,' said Jeff softly; 'well, let it be so; I was not impatient, you know, before.'

It was not impatience, nor yet disappointment, nor distress, that agitated the speaker; yet his face had blanched, and wore an expression anxious and *distracted*. But Kitty's eyes were fixed upon the floor, and saw him not.

'No; you were patient, and good, and kind, as you ever were, Jeff,' answered she tenderly. 'Whatever happens, I shall always think of you as—as all that. But indeed I must have time.'

'I am going now,' said Jeff, and indeed his hand was already on the door. Never surely were two fond lovers so willing that time and space should separate them, as these two seemed to be.

Throughout the day, from the moment her father had told her better times had come to them—he could no longer deny himself that pleasure, though he had forborne to speak of how his fortune was about to be restored to him—Kitty had been revolving in her mind her position as respected Holt. The money that he had advanced for the life-insurance premium would now be repaid to him of course, but could that acquit her of her obligation? and if it did, would it release her from the implied though unexpressed consent she had given to accept of his attentions? It was easy to break with him indeed, but could it be done with a good conscience?

In her heart of hearts, Kitty knew she had made up her mind to marry this man, and she feared that he knew she had done so. To marry him now—all the forces that had driven her towards him having suddenly ceased to exert their influence, while the dead-weight of dislike still drew her in the opposite direction—she felt to be impossible; but she also felt, notwithstanding the arguments which Jenny had just been pouring into her ear, and the still stronger claims which love itself, in the person of Jeff, was urging, that much, very much was owed to Richard Holt; indeed that all was owed by rights, only that the debt was too excessive for payment. At all events it was for him to impose what terms he pleased in default of its discharge. Until she had confessed to him that notwithstanding all that had come and gone she could never be his wife, she felt at least that it was unbecoming to speak of marriage with another. Hence it was she had said: 'I must have time.'

And Jeff needed 'time' too, though for a very different purpose. He could not understand her scruples, for had not Mr Holt himself said: 'I have wooed her without success;' yet he felt confident that the obstacle to which she had alluded was Holt, and no other. He was not at liberty—or did not feel himself to be so—to say that this man had already renounced his claim, if claim he had upon her; but something had suddenly taken place which might set her at liberty another way. And yet, to do Jeff justice, it was not that thought which was paramount in his mind, as, having quitted the presence of his beloved Kitty, he flew down-stairs, and snatching up his hat, let himself softly out of doors. Through the open window on his left he could hear Dalton and his half-brother talking earnestly over their cigars; he even caught the name of 'Holt' coupled with some adjective, expressive of contempt and loathing: it was strange, considering what he knew of the man, that he should feel pained to hear it; but so it was.

Then turning to the right hand, he sped away after the two street-hawkers, who, having cried themselves hoarse, were just about to enter the public-house at the corner, to refresh themselves with purl—a liquor as popular with gentlemen of their calling as Dublin stout is said to be with our fashionable sopranos.

'I want a copy of your paper; quick!' he said, as he came up with them.

'Well, you see, sir, it's the last we have,' grumbled the man addressed; 'and I don't think as sixpence is too much.'—

Jeff threw him a shilling and snatched the newspaper out of his hands, unconscious of the muttered remark of the vendor's partner: 'Why didn't you ask the chap a sufferin' for it?' He was a political economist of the soundest type, and had seen the necessity, which the other had omitted to see and take advantage of.

Jeff's practised eye lighted at once upon the big letters—'Suicide Extraordinary in Abdell Court.'

He had caught the name as he had sat at the open window, though it had escaped the ears of those who were less familiar with it, and at once associated the catastrophe with his late employer. His air and manner during their late interview were quite in consonance with such a deed, and even (as he now thought) his shameless candour.

Had not the wretched man himself likened it to a confession at the gallows foot!

Within five hours or so of Jeff's parting with him at the office, Richard Holt had destroyed himself.

LOSSES OF JEWELS.

SOME strange stories could be told of the losses of jewels and other valuable articles that have been recovered in a remarkable manner, or have altogether disappeared. We may relate a few incidents of this kind, for the entertainment of our readers.

During the Indian Mutiny, and after the destruction of some of the rich palaces and temples, the soldiers picked up many valuable articles, useless to themselves, and which they frequently threw away again, as troublesome to carry; or gladly sold to any one who would give them a few rupees in exchange. Among these acquisitions was a large, very roughly cut diamond, which had been one of the eyes of a gorgeously painted idol, enshrined in one of the temples that had been destroyed. A soldier picked it out of its socket, and as it was a rough, dull-looking stone, he thought very little of it, and was just going to throw it away, when an officer who stood by offered him two or three rupees for it. He also put but small store by his purchase of the lustreless stone; and it was only from its position as the eye of an idol that he judged it might possibly be of greater value than seemed likely from its outward appearance. Some time afterwards he shewed it to a native jeweller, who offered to buy it from him at a considerable increase on the price he had given for it; but he was going to England, and thought it wiser to take the stone with him, and have it properly cut by a first-class lapidary. This was done, and a very fine stone resulted; which the jeweller, at the most moderate calculation, valued at five hundred pounds. The officer had it set in a ring, and wore it for several years quite safely; but one day, chancing to be in London, he went into a shop to buy a pair of gloves, and looking at the ring on his little finger, he observed that the setting was empty, the diamond gone. He examined his glove, his pockets, the floor of the shop; no trace of the stone was to be seen, and so he gave it up as lost. However, he mentioned the matter at his club; and told the club-master to post up a notice offering ten pounds reward to any one who should find the diamond. A day or two afterwards the stone was brought to him. It had been found by one of the housemaids in a darkish passage that led to the billiard-room. The reward was gladly paid, and the diamond taken to the jeweller's, to be once more firmly replaced in the ring.

Again some years passed. The officer had been back to India, and was on furlough in this country, and had gone to Scotland to shoot with friends who had taken a moor in the Highlands. One hot August day he had been out for several hours tramping over miles and miles of close heather, grouse-shooting. He was still walking, when a covey of birds rose a little way off. He raised his gun to take aim, when his eye chanced to fall on his ring, and he saw that the setting was once more empty. Stopping to look at it, the

birds got away; and he laid down the gun on the heather beside him, and carefully examined the place where he stood with a very feeble hope of finding the glittering stone. Nothing was to be seen of it; and when he recollected the many miles he had traversed that day, and the nature of the ground he had been on, he abandoned all idea of ever again recovering his diamond. He stooped for his gun, and the thought flashed into his mind: 'I'll turn out the charge—the thing is just possible!' He did so; drew the wad, and then shook out the contents of the barrel, shot, powder, and—the diamond! It had slipped unnoticed into the muzzle when he was loading; and but for the lucky chance that had caused him to remark its absence from the ring, it would have been fired away the next moment. Possibly it might have hit a bird, gone back in the same bag, and caused as much amazement to the cook, or to the individual who found it between his teeth, as did the diamond in the eastern tale to the fisherman and his family who discovered it in the entrails of the fish. Another visit to the jeweller, and the ring resumed its place on the finger of its owner, and three or four years passed away. The officer had again returned to India, and was with his regiment, which was encamped near a large station, portions of some other regiments being close to them. He was acting as adjutant to the general in command, and was writing at a small table placed close to the door of his tent. As his hand passed rapidly over the paper, the troublesome diamond once more dropped from its setting, and fell on the table beside him. Being in a hurry, he merely uttered an angry exclamation, pushed the stone close to the inkstand, and went on with his writing. Presently a messenger came to say that the general wished to see him immediately. He forgot all about the stone, threw on his uniform, buckled on his sword, and started at once for the quarters of the commanding officer. He was detained some little time; and when he returned to his own tent, he looked directly for the diamond, which he had meanwhile recollected; but it was gone! A thief had been there during his absence, had seen and appropriated the stone; and he never saw or heard of it again, though he offered a liberal reward for its restoration.

Our next story relates to a young married lady who came with her husband to pay a visit to friends who lived in the country, very close to a small rural village. There were little children at home; and on the day preceding her return, the lady went to the village shop to purchase some trifling gifts for the juveniles. She took off her glove to get the silver from her purse; and as the day was warm, and the distance she had to return very short, she did not put the glove on again, but carried it back in her hand. When she reached the house she sat down and exhibited her purchases to her husband and friends. Suddenly she started and exclaimed: 'O my ring! I've lost my diamond ring!' On the third finger of her right hand she had worn a valuable diamond ring. It was too wide for her, and she had frequently intended to have its size reduced; but this precaution had hitherto been neglected, and she did not ordinarily wear it, from a dread of the misfortune that had now occurred.

Every one was immediately on the alert. The

village was small; perfect honesty prevalent among its inhabitants, and there had been no one in the shop when the lady was there, and only one or two of the villagers since, who had not been observed to pick up anything. The floor of the shop was thoroughly searched in every corner; the room where the lady had been sitting and also her bedroom were closely examined; but nothing could be seen of the ring. As she was positive that it had been on her hand just before she went out, for she distinctly remembered twirling it round and round with her fingers, a band of the village children was collected, arranged in a row, and desired to search the ground of the short avenue and the road to the shop as minutely as possible; proper remuneration being promised, and a tempting reward held out to the finder of the ring. They did their work very diligently; but it was all in vain. No trace of the ring was to be seen; and the lady reluctantly admitted that she had brought the mischance entirely on herself, by neglecting the trifling alteration that would have prevented it.

Many months passed away. The friends whom the lady had been visiting had gone from home for a time; and in their absence the servants gave the house a thorough cleaning from top to bottom. They came to the library, the room usually occupied in the morning, and which was almost entirely surrounded by book-shelves, filled with the works of ancient and modern authors. Shelf after shelf was cleared of its contents; and in the course of operations they came to one containing a collection of antique volumes, rare from their choice binding and from the nature of their contents, subjects eschewed by the ordinary class of novel-readers or students of light literature. As one of those heavy volumes was gently removed from its resting-place, something fell from it and rolled to the back of the shelf. One of the servants stooped down to see what it was, and the next moment triumphantly displayed in her hand the long-lost diamond ring!

It transpired afterwards that just before she went to the village shop the lady had been examining some of the shelves in the library, and had taken out several of the massive volumes we have mentioned, to make a nearer inspection of them. When finished, she replaced them in the shelves; and at that time the too wide ring must have fallen unperceived from her finger, and rested on the top of the book, which had not been touched from that day till the one on which it was so unexpectedly discovered.

Another curious loss and recovery of a ring was as follows. A young lady, engaged to be married, had received many beautiful gifts from her betrothed, one of them being a valuable sapphire ring. She had been out walking with him one afternoon, and on her return home she observed a parcel of new music that had just arrived for her. Sitting down to the piano, she played over several of the pieces, chatting occasionally as she did so with her mother and sisters, who were at work in the drawing-room. Soon afterwards they all went up-stairs to dress for dinner, and owing to the time that had been spent over the new music, were rather hurried in their movements, as it was close on the dinner-hour. The bell sounded almost before the young lady was ready, and hastily finishing her toilet, she ran down to join the circle in the drawing-room.

Proceeding to the dining-room, she found that she had neglected to put on her rings, and calling one of the servants, she desired him to tell her maid that she would find them lying on the wash-hand stand, as she had laid them there before washing her hands. The man quitted the room, and returned in a few minutes, carrying the rings on a small salver. The young lady took them up, glanced at them, and said: 'There ought to be one more—my sapphire ring. Please to go back to Smith, and ask her to look for it.'

He went, was absent rather longer this time, and on his return informed his young mistress that no other ring was to be seen.

'Oh, it must be there,' said the young lady. 'I laid them all down together. However, I'll go and look myself after dinner.'

She did so, and her sisters with her; but no sapphire ring rewarded their search; and the young lady became very much distressed, not only on account of the value of the ring, but because it was a present from her lover, and a family jewel very much prized by him. 'The ring was there, and must be found,' she said very decidedly; and once more they all prosecuted a totally unavailing search.

Matters began to look serious. The young lady's mother appeared on the scene, and looked and spoke very gravely upon the subject. The lady's-maid's character was unimpeachable; she had been more than ten years in the family, and was a thoroughly trusted servant. She declared solemnly that on receiving the message she went at once to the wash-hand stand and found four rings lying on it: the sapphire ring was not there, for she knew its appearance perfectly. She did not think of looking more particularly for it, as the rings were all close together; and she handed the four she saw to the man-servant.

Then came a very unpleasant surmise: had any one else been in the room? Inquiry elicited the fact that a young girl who had recently come as under-housemaid had entered the room very soon after the young lady had gone down to dinner. Suspicion pointed disagreeably towards her as the only person who could possibly have taken the ring; and yet the whole family felt very much averse to charge her with the theft. She was a pretty and very respectable-looking girl; but she had only been a week or two in the house, and nothing was known as to her antecedents beyond the circumstance of her having been well recommended by her previous mistress. The mother of the family took the girl aside privately, and told her that they feared she had been tempted to steal the jewel; urging her, if she had done so, to confess her fault and restore the ring immediately, and her fault would be overlooked. In an agony of grief and indignation the girl warmly protested her innocence; begging that a detective might be sent for directly to examine her boxes, a request in which all the other domestics concurred.

An officer was fetched, and a narrow inspection made; but nothing could be seen of the missing ring. Suspicion still remained attached to the unfortunate young housemaid, who, it was concluded, might have found means skillfully to conceal the ring; there was no proof against her, but the cold looks of the other servants were more than she could endure; so she threw up her situation

and went home with a tarnished name and a breaking heart.

Several days passed away, and the young lady was sadly distressed for the loss of her ring, and vowed over and over again that she would never again leave her jewels exposed in such a careless manner; she was now also much vexed about the poor young housemaid, and blamed herself for having thrown temptation in her way. It so happened that she had not been out of doors since the day of the unfortunate occurrence, the weather having been cold and wet, and her occupations detaining her a good deal at home; but a bright pleasant morning appeared, and she arranged to go out after breakfast with one of her sisters. The maid looked out her walking-things; and the fair *fiancée* donned her bonnet and sealskin jacket, and then took up her muff, which had been laid on the toilet-table beside her. She drew out her hand again directly, and with it a pair of kid gloves, and as she put them down one of them fell rather heavily on the table.

'What is that?' she exclaimed. Taking up the glove, she felt a small, hard object inside one of the fingers. A deep burning flush dyed cheek and brow, to be instantly succeeded by a deathly paleness. Sinking down on a chair, she covered her face with her hands, and gasped faintly: 'Oh, Smith, Smith! I shall never forgive myself! That poor innocent girl—she never took my ring. It is there!' And so it was; caught in the finger of the kid glove, which the young lady had carelessly drawn off on her return from her walk, and placed in her muff when she went to the piano, where it had remained untouched ever since.

Pleased as she was at the recovery of her valuable trinket, her satisfaction was much alloyed by remembering all the painful circumstances connected with it, especially the mental suffering of the poor young maid-servant who had been so unjustly suspected of having stolen the ring. She and her mother started directly for the home of the girl's widowed mother, and were grieved beyond measure to learn from her that the poor creature had been so overcome by distress of mind that very serious illness had resulted, and the doctor considered her symptoms very unfavourable. The good news brought by her late mistress had fortunately a beneficial effect, in combination with the greatest kindness and attention that could possibly be bestowed on her; and ere many weeks had passed she was perfectly restored to health. The young lady's marriage took place, and in her new home a comfortable situation was found for the girl, whose happiness was still further increased by the appointment of her mother as gatekeeper at the pretty lodge belonging to Hartfield Hall. And so the matter ended to the satisfaction of every one concerned; but it might have been far otherwise, and people should be exceedingly cautious how they make an accusation which they have no means of proving, lest they bring life-long misery upon the accused, and perhaps repentance when too late, upon themselves.

A gentleman was one day working in his garden. A ring was on his finger, set with a single diamond of great price. Suddenly he missed the stone from its place, and began to examine the ground very carefully, in hopes of seeing it sparkling at his feet. He had been pruning and grafting

fruit-trees, and had never left the spot where he was working, so he knew that somewhere within a radius of a few yards the stone must be lying; but though a minute search was made and continued for several days, and the earth carefully sifted, no diamond could be found.

The gentleman had almost forgotten the circumstance of his loss, when one morning, a long time afterwards, he was strolling, cigar in mouth, through the walks of his garden. As he passed a particular spot, he observed that something glittered brightly among the leaves of a pear-tree on the wall. As this occurred each time that he passed, his curiosity was aroused, and he stepped across the border to examine into the cause of the glitter. It was on the clay that had encircled a graft; and picking at the spot with his finger, he extricated a small shining object. It was his lost diamond! In a moment the whole circumstances flashed into his mind, and he remembered that he had grafted several cuttings that day; into one of which the stone had fallen, and had been held there by the tenacious clay, until this morning, when heavy rain having dislodged some particles of its covering, the sun's rays had glanced upon the diamond, and betrayed its hiding-place very luckily to its rightful owner.

At the time of the robbery of the Countess of Dudley's jewel-box at a railway station, a good deal of disapproval was expressed, and we think not without cause, at a reward being offered for their restoration with the promise 'No questions asked' appended to it. It is undoubtedly wrong to come to any compromise of that kind with thieves, as it is only offering an additional inducement to dishonesty, by rendering its commission comparatively safe. We remember, however, an occurrence that took place many years ago, when a similar inducement was held out to the thieves, unsuccessfully as it fell out, but without producing any disapproving comments.

The circumstance to which we allude happened in Edinburgh, to the wife of a physician of eminence at that time. She and her husband went out to dinner at a house situated in one of the 'Terraces,' a rather remote part of the city, where at all hours the traffic was small, and at the hour of a fashionable dinner-party very few persons indeed were likely to be passing. Moreover, it was broad daylight, or very nearly so; and they were driven to the house in their own carriage by a coachman who had been in the doctor's service for twenty years. The lady wore a handsome white lace-shawl; it had been her wedding veil, and she prized it for that circumstance as well as for its intrinsic value. To preserve it from being crushed, it was her habit to put it on the top of her warmer wraps; and on reaching the house where she was going to dine, it was properly adjusted by the waiting-maid. On this particular occasion she quitted the carriage, and walked along the passage to a bedroom on the same floor, where a maid was in waiting to assist her in removing her outer covering.

'Please take the lace-shawl off very carefully,' said the lady.

'Lace-shawl, ma'am?' replied the maid doubtfully. 'I don't see it, ma'am.'

'Yes, the white lace-shawl,' said the lady; then as she stood in front of the mirror she saw no

shawl was there. 'Oh, how stupid! I must have dropped it in the lobby. Look there, if you please.'

The maid did so instantly. No shawl was to be seen. She ran to the front door and looked out. No shawl on the pavement, no person in sight; only the carriage at a considerable distance, too far off for the coachman to hear had they even called after him.

'Oh, never mind,' said the lady; 'it can't be helped now. It must have slipped down on the floor of the carriage, and the coachman will find it when he gets home.' And she and her husband joined the party in the drawing-room, and gave themselves no further concern for the time about the shawl.

Now comes the strange part of the story. The coachman never found the shawl; it had not been left in the carriage, so far as he was aware; but not knowing of any special necessity for examining the interior of the vehicle, he had not done so before again bringing it at night to take home his master and mistress. Nothing, therefore, was heard of the shawl; and a notice of the loss was inserted in the newspapers, with a reward of ten pounds to whomsoever should restore it.

Some weeks passed, but no finder appeared. It seemed certain that the shawl had been stolen, and as the lady was very anxious to regain possession of it, a fresh notice was put into the papers: 'Fifteen pounds reward, and no questions asked.' A tolerably strong inducement to the thief, if such there were, to give back what must have been a very useless acquisition to him; and yet this advertisement met with no greater success than the other.

Weeks rolled on, and changed into months, and eventually years; the lady never more set eyes on her wedding veil, and finally abandoned all expectation of ever again recovering it; and she never has. Now, what became of that shawl?

FOLLOWING UP THE TRACK.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN the surprise and confusion incident to such an unwonted and irregular episode had partially subsided, the judge, in indignant language, denounced the scandal which had been enacted in a court of justice as more fitting for a theatre, and which no anguish of mind could excuse or even palliate. With some difficulty Stephen Meagher was released from the gripe of Ellen's husband, who was removed in custody for what was regarded as gross contempt; but in the passion of his vengeance, he was unconscious of all other thoughts or feelings than its indulgence.

'Your own proceeding, sir, was, I must say, very extraordinary, assuming the character of a witness rather than that of a counsel,' was the observation from the bench, addressed to Mr Travers. 'It was not justified by anything which was legally in evidence; and from your great experience and judgment, I should have expected no such dramatic exhibition.'

The skilled advocate bit his lips, but repressed the emotions which were agitating him, and then said with fervour, pointing to the money-lender

and publican, who was staring wildly around him, and supporting himself against the ledge of the desk behind which the clerk of the crown was seated: 'It remains for another day to shew whether *his* hands are not stained with innocent blood. Providence in its own good time will reveal the truth, and either vindicate his innocence of such a crime, or establish his guilt, if he be guilty. But before this tribunal and before the jury, after the exhibition he has made, I arraign the perjured testimony he has given in the face of the country—the attempt he has made to shield the prisoner in the dock by the story as to the possession of the love-token as false as it is incredible, and his attempt also to establish an alibi. And not he alone has been a lying witness; youth itself has been corrupted to serve a purpose.'

Clover, who had been standing in the immediate vicinity of the dock, a very attentive observer of all that had been passing, cast one quick, furtive glance around him, as he heard these latter words, and was then stealthily making his way through the crowd to the door leading into the general passage for the public.

'That lad must not go out for the present,' announced the authority in ermine, detecting the movement; 'he may be required during, or possibly after the present trial;' and Clover, seized by two constables, and leaving the court under their unpleasant guardianship, exclaimed in most appealing accents: 'Don't send me to jail, and I'll tell the truth and nothing but the truth. I was put up to swear what I did by my master and the man there;' but his declarations were either not heard or were disregarded.

No further questions were asked, as might be supposed, of Mr Stephen Meagher. He seemed like one in a cataleptic state; he crept along with uncertain steps, and was conducted to a room which opened into a pleasant garden; and in about an hour afterwards the sheriff, accompanied by a magistrate, was seen with him and Clover passing underneath the gloomy gateway of the jail, the latter two kept carefully apart by those who formed their escort.

The trial of the prisoner Brien Spelassy was now resumed, after the eventful incidents that had occurred, and which seemed to impress him with a fear similar to that of his employer. A visible anxiety succeeded to the firm bearing he had previously assumed; and darker and deeper fell the shadows around his path of life, as with a clearness almost amounting to demonstration, Mr Travers dwelt upon and wrought into, a chain of continuous strength all the facts which led to but the one result. He professed not to introduce any topics except those strictly relevant; and the jury were therefore, he added, not to prejudice the case of the accused by what had taken place with Meagher, save so far as the alibi sworn to by that man had been incidentally elicited to be a concocted one. It was not now the time or the place to say whether he was one of the

three who had come to the Glen. There was no formal charge against him at present of which they could take cognisance, but it would be affectation to suppose that what had so recently occurred could be wholly erased from their minds. The marvellous coincidence between the torn portion of the coat and the piece which the bereaved husband retained possession of after his deadly struggle in the bedroom, was a startling fact, but it ought not to press against the prisoner; but on the other hand they would have to consider, was the evidence of the publican and Clover the result of an artful conspiracy, in order that by little specious and, as it were, incidental circumstances, and therefore the more plausible, the crime in which John Dwyer had unquestionably been a participator, should be fixed upon two imaginary strangers, one of them a pretended Spanish sailor, with a peculiar mark upon his face which could leave no doubt as to his supposed identity? This attempt to defeat justice would most likely have proved successful had it not been for the providential incident connected with the false and fabricated copy of an entry that never existed—an entry professing to fix the time, and to record a sale which had never taken place.

When the Chief-justice proceeded to charge the jury, swayed by no feelings but those of right and of truth, it could scarcely be even conjectured what opinion he himself had formed in reference to the guilt or innocence of the accused. After referring to the remarkable testimony as to the possession of the love-token, and its being found in a depository over which the prisoner had exclusive dominion, he warned those on whose fiat depended the issues of life or death, not in any way to be influenced by suspicions arising from the startling charge so irregularly made by the man frenzied with excitement against the employer of Spelassy. It should have no adverse influence as regarded the latter; and the gentlemen he was addressing ought to blot it out of their minds. It was rather a scene to be witnessed on the French stage than one suited for the arena of an unimpassioned tribunal of justice. They should carefully weigh all the evidence at either side, especially that which was given by Meagher, and which if credible, went to shew that the possession of this token by the man at the bar was not a guilty one.

The twelve jurors who had now to fulfil their functions at the close of the trial slowly retired to their room for deliberation; and groups in the crowded court-house proceeded to discuss with lively interest what would be the probable result; and without assuming too much against poor human nature, the same feeling was manifested as by sportsmen who consider a day as lost if the object of their pursuit is not hunted down, be it the timid inoffensive hare, or the crafty and felonious fox.

After an interval of four weary hours, the door of the jury-room opened, and a murmur of 'Hush, hush!' spread like a wavelet to the extremest end of the gallery; but when the members of that body had seated themselves, the foreman, in answer to the question from the clerk of the crown: 'Have you agreed to your verdict?' replied: 'No! Some of the jury wish to have read over to them again the evidence of Maurice Power as to what occurred when he left the public-house in Clonmel, and also

the particulars of his struggle with the men when he rushed into the bedroom of the cottage.'

The requisition was at once of course complied with by the judge, and then they retired; and again, after an interval of about an hour, made their appearance, the issue-paper held in the hand of the foreman. There was profound silence. The prisoner, who in their absence had been taken to a cell removed from the view and gaze of the public, was now placed in front of the dock, and with fearful earnestness fixed his eyes upon the portentous document which had been at this juncture handed down to the proper official. Portentous indeed! One little word included—only three letters—and the freshness of the mountain air through the perfumed heather may blow upon the face of the free man. But no! The three letters are *not* there, and a deep low voice reads the verdict, 'Guilty.' 'Neither the sun nor death can be looked at steadily,' was the saying of a profound thinker, 'even when the last messenger comes to one worn out with long sickness, and with nerves dulled with pain, or inert from the want of vital energy. But what is it when the man is to be stricken down in the full vigour of his physical strength, and with shame and execration as his attendants through the dark valley.' 'Look to him, jailer!' was uttered by the official; and then there came a heavy 'thud,' and within the barred inclosure lay the prostrate and grovelling form of one of Cain's lineal descendants. It was, after all, a cruel kindness of the surgeon who was present to awaken the miserable wretch to consciousness—to bring back the flow of blood from the oppressed brain to the palpitating heart for the forty-eight hours only then allowed from the pronouncement of doom to its execution—to restore consciousness, when forgetfulness and utter oblivion of the present would have been the only boon. But the criminal, after an interval, was rendered sensible of what was passing around, yet only to hear the impressive and now broken voice of authority speaking; a solemn voice, exhorting to repentance of the past, and reminding of the mercy not akin to this world. The time was short, indeed, within which a change was to come over that stolid, degraded being, and then away to a far-distant land through the desert; but amid the gloom and the darkness, the gentle breathings of charity whisper that angels have visited condemned cells, and have brought words of hope and assurance to the worst of criminals.

CHAPTER XII.

In the early year of the present century with which our narrative is conversant, the assizes at Clonmel usually occupied more than a fortnight—the execution of Brien Spelassy was a wonder of the day, and its interest had passed away; but that interest was awakened anew when within the fortnight the money-lender, even changed in aspect within such a short period, and with words his looks belied, pleaded 'Not guilty' to the indictment which charged him with having with others bereft of life, Ellen Power. Public opinion was adverse to the prisoner, public opinion, which is seldom mistaken in the end. It dispenses its praise, but more frequently its censure, with impartiality, whether to the blue-veined aristocrat, or to the drunken coster-monger who kicks

his wife when she asks for a shilling to buy bread for her starving children. Witness after witness came forward when once the clue had been discovered; and Clover, now that there was no object to be attained but his safety, made a 'clean breast of it,' as country-people colloquially express it. His revelation was to the following effect. On the night of the tragedy, Spelassy, his master Stephen Meagher, and John Dwyer—who had been secreted in a loft over the stable of the public-house, to avoid being seen by strangers—left Clonmel at an early hour after dark, taking a circuitous bridle-road, carrying with them firearms, which had been carefully loaded before they started on their journey, and were wrapped round with long 'suggauns,' or twisted hay-ropes. He was directed to detain, under any pretext which his ingenuity could suggest, the farmer, when he should call, pursuant to his previous arrangement; and the usurer handed his servant a little phial containing a dark-coloured liquor, which he was to put into the drink of the expected visitor. Clover deposed that he did accordingly administer the draught, which threw its recipient into a profound sleep, and in which state he remained until the house was locked up for the night. He added that at daybreak, or shortly afterwards, the prisoner and Spelassy returned, and shut themselves up in the private room of the farmer; and the witness being stimulated by curiosity, after a little time crept to the door of the apartment in question, against which he placed a chair, and through a little opening eagerly watched their proceedings. A pile of money was carefully divided on the table into three portions; and after that business had been completed, an animated and angry discussion arose, but carried on in whispered accents, as to what should be done with the third part, for which there was no ostensible representative or owner; but the lad, fearful of being discovered, removed the chair, and quickly withdrew to the bar of the public-house, the glasses in which he was ostensibly busy in cleaning when the two men came out from the room. From that day forth he noticed that no very friendly relations seemed to subsist between Spelassy and his employer. Half-muttered threats were at intervals uttered by the former when drink made him forget his usual cunning, to the effect that he could reveal something if provoked which would leave the establishment without an owner; but with returning sobriety he always anxiously declared that this was all silly talk, and that the liquor had left him no sense.

The revelations of this witness were of course denounced by the prisoner's counsel as false, and an after-thought; and it was urged very plausibly that no reliance could be placed on the testimony of one who admitted on his cross-examination having so recently, on the previous trial of Spelassy, committed a series of cunningly devised perjuries. But to no such impeachment was the person amenable who next came forward. The honest countenance of Daniel Gleeson was in itself more accrediting than fifty letters-testimonial of character; and in the most natural and quiet but persuasive manner he stated, that after the conviction of Spelassy he by mere chance took up a newspaper containing a report of his trial; for literature did not in any shape, except in ballads sung and sold at fairs, find its way into rural

districts; and farmers busy about their own affairs, were then better pleased to be in happy ignorance of the wrongs they were supposed to be undergoing at the hands of their landlords. The reading of the trial at once brought to his memory what he had seen on All-Hallow Eve. His farm was situated about a mile from the secluded gorge leading from Clonmel to Maurice Power's cottage; he had only very recently become the tenant, and on the night in question he was in his haggard, which abutted on the high-road, armed with a gun, to protect his corn, as he had incurred hostility in that neighbourhood from the mere fact of taking the land from which the former occupier had been dispossessed seven years before. But what are seven years to an Irishman who passes by the place which once was his? His memory remains as green as when first he was driven from its threshold, and his vengeance as fresh as when the door of his cabin was locked by the sheriff and his humble furniture put out on the road-side. While on the watch, Gleeson heard the steps of men approaching from the direction of Clonmel, and he drew himself up quite close to the outer gate; but the strangers passed on, and in the obscurity he could scarcely discover more than that they were three in number. But they had only proceeded a few yards past the gate when a sharp cry of alarm was heard from the party; for a fierce mastiff that the farmer had brought with him into the haggard, dashing through one of the broken bars, was seemingly about to spring upon them. Gleeson quickly followed, in order to draw off the infuriated animal; and in order to effect this, he was obliged to come up quite close to the nearest of the men, and he was about proceeding to offer some words of explanation and regret, when the other ejaculated: 'What do you mean, you scoundrel, by letting the brute loose? I have a great mind to give him the contents of this;' at the same time drawing out a pistol from his pocket as he spoke.

'Did you ever,' asked the counsel, 'see that man since the night you are speaking of?'

'I did, in the jail-yard four days ago, where he was standing with about fifteen more persons; and I knew him at once; and there he is,' accompanying the words by walking up to the front of the dock, and laying his hand upon the head of the usurer, who cowered beneath his touch.

Finally those who were acting for the crown produced the widowed husband; and after his graphic detail of his encounter with the assassins, the coat of the prisoner, with the rent so visible in it near the breast, and the corresponding piece with the button attached, fitting into the vacancy, were subjected to the curious and anxious examination of the jury. The village tailor was scarcely needed to prove, as he did clearly and distinctly, that the coat had been made by him for Meagher, and that the torn bit found in the grasp of Power after his deadly struggle, formed an integral and constituent portion of the dress. The poisoned garment of the athlete of antiquity did not cling to its possessor with more fatal folds than did that of the money-lender to its guilty owner.

The trial concluded, the doom had been pronounced; and fearfully brief indeed was the interval between the sentence and the gathering together of a vast crowd outside the walls of the county jail to witness the last earthly struggle of the condemned. Little time allowed for preparation for the drear

journey to another world; and on this especial morning what a contrast between the face of nature and the judicial tragedy to be enacted! The short but wide street where the last penalty of the law was to be paid was terminated by a passage opening out on the gently flowing waters of the Suir. Banks of the deepest hues of green; trees of every graceful variety of form, through which glancing shadows flitted in erratic play; an islet in the middle distance, half concealing, but only to interest the more, the vision of two silvery sinuous lines, over which hung foliage of almost tropical wealth of verdure; and then far away in the background, the mountains lifting their guardian forms above the sheltered, sunny valleys at their feet, added sublimity to the more gentle attractions of the winding river. There was no sympathy for the condemned man; an unusual circumstance. Had it been a wretched tenant, however improvident or careless, driven from his humble home by greed, caprice, or even in the just exercise of legitimate rights, to find shelter in the ditch by the way-side; had it been one who killed a tithe-proctor when enforcing the rigid decrees of the law; had it been one who, in the heat of blood, avenged a personal wrong or a party feud; or even one who with deliberation and treachery lured an informer to a secret place, and then struck him down—there would have been compassion felt and prayers uttered; the tears of women, and the less developed grief of those of a sterner sex. But for the cold, harsh extortioner, trading on the miseries of others, and who had added a double homicide to the crime of mean plunder—for him there was nothing but the exultation of hatred, or the less active emotion of contempt. Still, when the tolling bell announced the hour of eight o'clock, the whole assemblage, at the instance of the priest, dropped upon their knees, and joined in sincere and reverent supplication to Heaven. Not quite the whole assemblage, for there was one who bent no knee and uttered no prayer—one who, privileged by his wrongs and his misery, had been admitted within the cordon guarded by the soldiery. He stood erect, with riveted eyes watching the moment when he should murmur as he passed on his lonely way: 'Ellen, my darling, and you my poor child, I have had satisfaction for your fate, and hope soon to meet you again.'

It was but a few months after the events last recorded, when, in the hospital of the County Tipperary, the resident physician whispered to the nurse who had volunteered her services, and whose youthful, expressive face appeared prematurely aged by attendance on scenes of affliction and of suffering: 'He cannot, poor fellow, last beyond the night.' These few significant words made more rigid the countenance of her to whom they were addressed. The approach of death often quickens the faculties, as if to shew the supremacy of the immortal spirit over its frail depository, and either the sick man overheard the words, or guessed their import from the manner of the speaker, and a gleam of pleasure crossed his haggard and wasted features. 'I am glad of it,' he gasped out with difficulty; 'there is no one I would live for, and I feel that I am going home.' 'You must not speak so sadly,' observed the attendant; 'it is sinful to wish to depart before

the time which God has given you, and life ought to be dear to all of us.'

'It should indeed,' was the response. 'And what curse ought to fall on those who took away what they could not give? I thought so once; but better notions now come into my mind; and I could forgive even those who made me what I am, if they were still living!'

As if agitated by some fearful emotion at the recollection of the past, the patient sought to raise himself from the pillow, but fell back helplessly, and one or two suppressed sobs evidenced the consciousness of his physical weakness. A long interval, and not a word was spoken, while the clock in the corridor ticked and recorded the minutes with what seemed a callous persistency of purpose, indifferent to the events which a few revolutions of the index-hand might record. But then came disjointed utterances in the pauses between physical suffering and weakness: 'I did not, I could not know he was there. I broke her heart, no doubt; but was I to blame for it? Why did he mix himself up with the villains in their unholy work?' The speaker closed his eyes, ostensibly to remove away from him some terrible presence, and it seemed as if the last breath was passing away into the silence of the grave. Hot, scalding tears fell upon his face—the bending form of the faithful attendant was over the fever-stricken man. One final effort, and half lifting up his emaciated form, Maurice Power exclaimed: 'I know now I am not dreaming! It can be no one else than Mary! Oh! Mary Dwyer, forgive me the wrong which I did you, but it was unknown to myself at the time!' After these few words were uttered, there was an ominous silence for a minute or more, while the last throes of life were breaking in broken sounds upon the shore of time, and then came the impassioned response: 'I do indeed, from my heart of hearts!' Death and its 'counterfeit presentment' were at that awful instant associated. The physician closed the eyelids of the dead; and Mary Dwyer lay insensible upon the body as the pledge of her Christian faith and forgiveness was still quivering upon her lips.

'The old, old fashion,' says a great one, who himself has passed away; 'the fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has lost its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion! Death!'

Here our story is ended.

USEFUL ITEMS FROM FRANCE.

MUCH as we dread the pinching frosts and biting winds that check the sprouting wheat and nip the tender blossoms of our fruit-trees in their first flush of promise, our neighbours on the sunnier side of the Channel have still more reason to dislike a chilly and backward spring. French agriculture in many provinces partakes of the character of gardening, and vines and olives and madder and white mulberry, to say nothing about almond and orange trees, are of delicate constitution. One sharp night, one bitter dawn, when the hoar-frost glitters on the grass, may convert the competence of the husbandman into comparative poverty. The

drier atmosphere and hotter sun of France, as of most continental countries, tend to produce such nightly frosts, from which the natural moisture of our own climate preserves us, with destructive frequency. M. Pinard, a wine-grower of inventive disposition, last year applied himself successfully to remedy this evil, and to guard his vineyard against the periodical raids of Jack Frost. He conceived the bold idea that artificial clouds, capable of moderating the excessive radiation of heat from the earth skywards, might be formed. Two crucial conditions had to be faced. M. Pinard's clouds must be cheap, and they must be at hand when wanted. Mixing coal-tar with wetted chaff and sawdust, so as to form huge balls, ready, when ignited, to darken the sky, he placed these on the ground at selected spots. Each lump contained two gallons of tar, calculated to burn, in calm weather, for three hours and a half. By an ingenious device, the thermometer, in sinking to within two degrees of the centigrade zero, communicates the tidings by electric telegraph to the sleeping vine-dresser, so that the advancing enemy Frost is actually made to ring the alarm-bell that gives warning of his approach. The labourers sally out to kindle the tar-beacons, and the peril is averted.

M. Tellier's fire-extinguisher, for the salvage of burning ships at sea, is of the simplest nature, demanding no outlay save for a couple of large pans of sheet-iron, some raw sulphur, and an auger wherewith to bore holes in the bulk-heads and lower decks, to admit the passage of the heavy sulphurous gas that will result from the combustion of the sulphur, displacing atmospheric air as it rolls its weighty volume through the hold and cabins, absorbing oxygen, and choking the flames. Thirty pounds-weight of sulphur would yield gas enough to stifle a conflagration below decks in the largest ship, and ventilation will presently get rid of the vitiated atmosphere.

A means of applying strong heat on a small scale cheaply and conveniently is welcome in many trades and by many experimentalists. M. Quichenot's Lamp-forgé, which comprises a blow-pipe, and which does its work by the help of petroleum, may be useful to those who do not employ gas for heating purposes. Strictly speaking, it is the vapour of petroleum, mixed with heated air, which yields the source of heat, the intensity of which may be judged of by the fact that this small apparatus can in ten minutes fuse four ounces of pure copper or nickel, and about three ounces of malleable iron. For soldering, this blow-pipe is well adapted.

To press the sun into the direct service of mankind, and to make his rays heat a steam-engine, seem tasks rather worthy of a Laputan philosopher than of a practical man of the hard-headed nineteenth century. Yet M. Mouchot, a schoolmaster at Tours, has after ten years of patient study patented an engine which is driven by steam, the water in the boiler being heated by no fuel, but by solar rays alone. The boiler, which is blackened, receives the concentrated heat flung upon it by a large metallic mirror, a

great bell-glass covering the boiler and preventing the escape of the solar heat otherwise than as 'dark rays,' while separate mechanism keeps the apparatus in its true axis towards the sun. The machine works, slowly indeed, but steadily and economically, acting at the same time as an excellent medium for distilling water, for cooking vegetables, and for similar uses. It is considered as especially suitable for countries where, as in Algeria or India, fuel is dear and the sun hot and generally perceptible.

The well-known phenomenon of the philosophical candle has suggested to M. Kastner a sort of musical instrument to which he gives the name of a pyrophone, and which consists of numerous short jets of hydrogen gas, or even of coal gas, ignited. The vibration of the air, as countless tiny detonations occur, accounts for these sounds, which resemble those of a flute, and can be modulated at pleasure.

A new and powerful light available for photographers, has lately been devised. That sulphuret of carbon will burn brilliantly is a fact that has been known since the first discovery of the compound, but until lately no one ever dreamed of impressing so volatile a liquid into doing duty as lamp-oil. This has been done with success, but the vapour requires to be handled cautiously. It is absorbed by a number of pieces of porous pumice-stone in the centre of the apparatus, and there made to combine with a gas known as the binoxide of nitrogen, and easy to procure when iron is immersed in nitro-sulphuric acid. The dazzling jet of flame, nine inches high, which this lamp yields surpasses the effects produced by all artificial lights hitherto known. It is twice as efficacious as the lime-light, three times as potent as the electric light, and distances, though at a less interval, that of the magnesium wire. It also receives deserved praise as being steady, cheap, and not very fatiguing to the eyes.

The French Aërial Navigation Society does its best, like similar Gallic scientific associations, to stimulate inventors, but as yet it is compelled to admit that practice lags wofully in the wake of theory. M. Penaud has indeed within the last few months exhibited a tiny model of a flying-machine, which raised itself by the force of a screw-propeller to the ceiling of the lofty hall in which the Society met, and also an artificial bird which rose on flapping wings above the heads of the spectators. Light models of a similar kind have, however, been made at various times and in more than one country during the last fifty years; and it is plain that aërostation has, we fear, a dreary future, as it awaits the discoverer who shall give us a new source of motive-power, light, safe, and constant, to do for us what wings do for the bird and the insect.

The preserving of perishable articles of food attracts every year more and more attention, since the perpetual rise in prices renders the populous countries of Western Europe increasingly dependent on distant lands for their supply. We have to draw milk from Switzerland, eggs from Ireland and France, grain from Russia, and not merely meat, but fruit, cheese, and other farm-produce from America. Condensed oxygen is the latest French, as washed or filtered air is the latest British, contribution to the existing knowledge on this point. In oxygen strongly compressed, fer-

mentation it appears cannot take place, and vegetable or animal matter may therefore be thus retained in a condition perfectly sweet and wholesome for an indefinite period.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING'S CAMPAIGNE.

Sir John Suckling, a poet of the earlier part of the seventeenth century, possessed a playful fancy and polished wit. His knowledge of life and society, according to the *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, enabled him to give interest to trifles, and to clothe familiar thoughts in the garb of poetry. Emancipated while yet a youth from all restraint, and possessed of a large fortune, Suckling set off on his travels. He was an adventurous spirit; and when Charles I. took up arms against the Parliament, Suckling presented the king with a hundred horsemen. This troop formed part of the cavalry commanded by Lord Holland; but no sooner had they come in sight of the Scots army at Dunse than they retired and fled—Suckling amongst the routed. A rival wit and poet, Sir JOHN MENNIS, indited a ballad on the retreat at Dunse, which has been considered to be one of the liveliest and most successful of political ballads.

SIR JOHN he got him an ambling nag,
To Scotland for to ride-a,
With a hundred horse mo', all his own also,
To guard him on every side-a.

No errant-knight ever went to fight
With half so gay a bravado,
Had you seen but his look, you'd have said on a book
He'd have conquered a whole armada.

The ladies ran all to the windows to see
So gallant and warlike a sight-a,
And as he passed by, they began to cry:
'Sir John, why will you go fight-a?'

But he, like a cruel knight, spurred on;
His heart would not relent-a,
For, till he came there, what had he to fear?
Or why should he repent-a.

The king (God bless him!) had singular hopes
Of him and all his troop-a:
The borderers they, as they met him on the way,
For joy did hollo and whoop-a.

None liked him so well as his own colonell,
Who took him for John de Weart-a;
But when there were shows of gunning and blows,
My gallant was nothing so pert-a.

For when the Scots army came within sight,
And all prepared to fight-a,
He ran to his tent; they asked what he meant;
He said he could not go right-a.

The colonell sent for him back again,
To quarter him in the van-a,
But Sir John did declare he would not come there,
To be killed the very first man-a.

But now there is peace, he's returned to increase
His money, which lately he spent-a;
But his lost honour must lie still in the dust;
At Berwick away it all went-a.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.